RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

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CHRIST'S HOSPITAL—A RAGGED SCHOOL?

It would, perhaps, surprise some of our readers if we were to speak of Christ's Hospital as a Ragged School. The boys in the antique but familiar dress of long blue coat, leathern girdle, yellow stockings, and low shoes, are never associated with the class of children usually found as scholars in Ragged Schools. We have sometimes seen them as occupants of private carriages, and dining with the *élite* of society; but never yet have we met with one in a Ragged School, or that has ever belonged to one, although our experience extends to the lengthened period of more than thirty years. Nevertheless we say, if Christ's Hospital is not a Ragged School, *it ought to be*, if the purposes for which it was founded were carried out.

We have not one word to say against that institution. It has done a great and good work for generations past and present, and in all probability will continue to do so for generations yet future. But what we do say is, that that institution does not deal with the class for which it was called into existence. The proof of this is clear by a reference to the circumstances attending its foundation. Those circumstances are interesting inasmuch as they show that the ragged class existed in London in large numbers more than three centuries ago, and that there were then those living who, from the highest of Christian motives, searched wide to find out the numbers that composed that class, and dived low to ascertain their miseries. They were men of practical Christianity, and never rested till the means were devised, adopted, and carried out to lessen those numbers and mitigate those miseries.

The remarkable origin of this institution demands that we give some details of the great man who towered above his contemporaries, and whose burning words led to its formation. This great

man was Dr. Ridley, of martyrdom renown, who became Bishop of London in 1550. When a boy he was educated at the grammar school at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In 1518, when about eighteen years of age, he went to Cambridge University. In Pembroke Hall he greatly distinguished himself by his learning, and was elected to a fellowship. In 1527 he went to Paris to study at the Sorbonne, then one of the most celebrated centres of learning in Europe. He returned to Cambridge and applied himself with ardour to the study of the Word of God, and with such vigour that it is said that he committed to memory most of the epistles in the original Greek. In the year 1534 he signed, as Proctor, the Decree of the University against the Pope's supremacy, to the effect "*that the Bishop of Rome had no more authority or jurisdiction, derived from God, in this kingdom of England, than any other foreign bishop.*" Archbishop Cranmer looked upon him with favour, appointing him his domestic chaplain, and afterwards gave him the living of Herne, in Kent. So assiduous was he in the discharge of his duties, and his teaching was so attractive, that he drew large attendances to his church. The relief of the destitute, and the attention to the sick and dying, called forth his unceasing efforts, and while so engaged the degree of D.D. was conferred upon him, also the Mastership of Pembroke Hall, and a chaplaincy to Henry VIII. Cranmer added to these honours by presenting him with one of the prebendal stalls of Canterbury Cathedral. In 1547, on the accession of Edward VI., Ridley became Bishop of Rochester, and translated to London in 1550.

It is recorded of him that on every Sunday and holiday he preached, and to his church the people resorted, swarming about him like bees, earnestly desiring to hear the gospel of Christ from his lips; and so completely did he *live* the gospel that even his enemies could not reprove him in any one iota thereof.

Of his power and persuasiveness as a preacher the following is a signal and memorable illustration, and is the point to which we call attention:—

"In the beginning of the year 1553 Dr. Ridley preached before King Edward at Westminster. The subject of his sermon was '*Charity.*' In eloquent and moving language he urged that more effectual provision should be made for the poor. The discourse made a deep impression on the monarch, who, to understand more clearly the necessities referred to by the bishop, and

the means for meeting them, sent for the preacher. The interview took place, the king thanked the bishop for bringing the subject before him, and then requested him to state in what way the difficulties could be fairly, and, if possible, fully met. The king's graciousness brought tears of joy into Ridley's eyes, and with much emotion he referred to the number and the sufferings of the poor. He advised the king to have letters written to the authorities of the City of London, that the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen be requested to take the matter into consideration, with a view to a scheme being projected to provide relief. The advice was adopted. Letters were placed in the hands of the bishop, who conveyed them to the Lord Mayor (Sir R. Dobbs).* A meeting of the Aldermen and Common Council was held. The bishop was present at it. At this meeting it was resolved unanimously that a special appeal be made to the citizens for contributions. The Londoners liberally responded. The wards readily entered into the scheme, providing collecting books and carrying out the object in detail. When completed, these books, containing the names of the donors and the amount contributed, were handed to the king's commissioners.

The money being thus in hand, a report was drawn up and a scheme devised. By it the poor were divided into three divisions:—

1st. Poor distressed orphans.

2nd. The sick, the diseased, the lame, and those with other bodily maladies.

3rd. Lazy and sturdy vagabonds.

* In the court room of Christ's Hospital are many fine pictures, mostly portraits of presidents and benefactors; among them is one of Sir Richard Dobbs, Knt., 1553, and underneath are the following lines:—

Christes Hospital erected was,
a passinge Dede of Pittie;
What time Sir Richard Dobbe was Maior
of thys most famous Citie,
Who carefull was in Government,
and furthered much the same;
Also a Benefactor good,
and joyed to see it frame;
Whose Picture heare his Friends has sett,
to putt each Wight in mind,
To imitate his Vertuous Dedes
as God hathe us assin'de.

The scheme propounded three remedies :—

1st. The formation of a refuge-home where the poor distressed orphans would be properly fed, lodged, clothed, educated, and so fitted for some honest and respectable calling. This refuge-home was then started, and is the present *Christ's Hospital* in Newgate Street, London, and at Hertford, in Hertfordshire.

2nd. St. Thomas's Hospital and St. Bartholomew's Hospital were appointed to receive the sick, wounded, and diseased. St. Thomas's stood for ages near the southern end of London Bridge, but lately removed to Westminster Bridge—a site opposite the Houses of Parliament. St. Bartholomew's stood, and still stands, in West Smithfield.

3rd. The palace of Bridewell had been built by Henry VIII., but by Edward VI. was, in consequence of this inquiry, converted into a prison where beggars and vagrants could receive due correction, and, if needful, be kept to hard labour. Bridewell stood on the west side of New Bridge Street, near the City end of Blackfriars Bridge. During the last few years modifications of the buildings have taken place, but Bridewell still exists on its old site.

The contributions of the citizens were liberal, but not equal to the full necessity of the three great institutions. At this time there was a hospital in the Savoy, founded by Henry VII., for the benefit of pilgrims and travellers, but which had lost its character for usefulness, and even respectability, for it had, as reported, become a harbour for thieves and disreputable characters. This hospital was dissolved by Edward VI., and its property handed over to the City for the endowment of the three institutions named above.

Such were the remarkable issues of a single sermon preached, certainly, by a remarkable man, before a model monarch of blessed memory.

The hospital in the Savoy lost its character by a *descent* in the scale of usefulness and respectability, and was no longer a benefit to the class of persons for whom it was originally founded. The

hospital in Newgate Street, in the estimation of many, has also lost its character, not by a *de*scent, but by an *ascent* in the scale of respectability, and is no longer carried on for the benefit of the class of persons for which it was originally founded.

The first may have failed because the supply of pilgrims and travellers ceased, or lessened in numbers in England, during the throes of casting off Papal supremacy and discontinuing Popish customs; but who can say that the supply of "poor distressed orphans" has ceased in England? The answer is, that in number they are "legion," and by our Ragged Schools, Refuges, and Industrial Schools portions are admitted in "cohorts, companies, and centuries," and provided for by the kind and voluntary offerings of the people.

That Christ's Hospital did discharge its duty to the "poor distressed orphans" in its early history can be proved. Dr. Hughson, in his work on "London," states in vol. iii., pages 572-3, that "Edward VI. founded Christ's Hospital in the Grey Friars' Convent for the relief of young, helpless, fatherless children, and in the first year of its charter, admitted as many as 340" of these waifs and strays of the British metropolis. Lambert, in his "History and Survey of London," vol. iii., pages 30-1, confirms the statements made by Dr. Hughson.

In the 300 years that have elapsed since this institution was launched on its errand of mercy and philanthropy great changes have come over it. "Poor distressed orphans" are no longer sought out to receive the care and culture provided by charter granted for that purpose. Orphanage and poverty have not for generations been the passports to share the benefits of Christ's Hospital. The doors have been practically closed against this class, and opened to admit the children of a well-to-do portion of society.

Instead of orphanage and poverty being the qualifications for admission, no child can now be admitted without a presentation, and must be able to read with facility, to write legibly, to say the multiplication table if under nine years of age, but if a year older must in addition be able to spell fairly from dictation, and to work the four simple rules of arithmetic, and are advised to offer themselves for examination in the elements of the Latin grammar. Only think of the gutter-children getting a presentation and coming up to such a standard for admission!

The object of institutions of this kind, as expressed at their inception, is often clear and definite, and for a time is fairly carried out; but the tendency of educational institutions is to *improve* after their first or second generation of scholars, and the improvement goes on till the class for which they were founded is wholly "*improved*" out of their care and culture. This kind of "*improvement*" is applicable to other institutions besides Christ's Hospital. SUNDAY SCHOOLS were commenced for a class thus described: "Robert Raikes, in 1783, went to hire a gardener somewhere near Gloucester, and while waiting for him noticed a troop of wretched, noisy boys, who interrupted him as he conversed with the gardener's wife. He asked whether they belonged to that part of the town, and lamented their misery. "Ah, sir!" said the woman, "could you take a view of this part of the town on *Sunday*, you would be shocked indeed; for then the street is filled with multitudes of these wretches, who, released on that day from employment, spend their time in noise and riot, playing at chuck, and cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid as to convey to any serious mind an idea of hell rather than any other place." This, for a basis, led Raikes to devise a scheme to remedy the evil. That scheme was to engage a few persons at the cost of a shilling a day each to gather in as many as they could of these wretched children to be instructed in reading, taught the catechism, and taken to church, himself acting the scout or beadle to do the out-door work, and inducing these roughs to enter these, to all intents and purposes, "Ragged Schools." Such was the humble commencement of the Sunday School system. "The contrast," wrote Mr. Watson, the late revered secretary of the Sunday School Union—"the contrast between the school just described, and a well-conducted school of the present day, is so great, that the resemblance can scarcely be perceived." This great non-resemblance has been the result of a more orderly and respectable class of children taking the place of such as attracted Raikes's attention and excited his sympathies in one of the suburbs of the city of Gloucester.

In 1798 Joseph Lancaster opened his first school. He was his own carpenter in making his school furniture out of old boards. Twenty-five shillings met the first cost. One hundred children were soon under his tuition. At first he thought they could pay something for the teaching, but was soon undeceived. His object

was to get the children, fees or no fees, and he therefore put up a notice outside that "all that will, may send their children, and have them educated freely; and those that do not wish to have education for nothing, may pay for it if they please." The result was the necessity for larger premises, and a school of 800 boys and 200 girls—a large proportion shoeless, capless, half-clad, and less than half-fed, so much so that he had to raise contributions to provide dinners for the most necessitous. He could not afford to provide copy-books nor yet slates for teaching writing, and as a substitute had sand desks, and in the sand the scholars were taught to write with the forefinger of the right hand for a pen. He could not afford to pay masters to help him, he therefore employed one pupil to teach another, and in order to elicit the best efforts of these teaching-boys he hung from the ceiling a number of toys that were to be prizes to the best workers at the end of each week. In this unpremeditated way was a system inaugurated that attracted the admiration of kings, princes, and nobles, and the British and Foreign School Society was inaugurated for its extension to all parts of the British dominions, and, as opportunity offered, to draw the attention of foreign nations to it. Again may we quote that "the contrast" of the Lancasterian School in its inception and the British School of later days "is so great that the resemblance could scarcely, if at all, be perceived." The schools have again "*improved*" by the admission of a better-to-do class, which has taken the place of the one dealt with by Joseph Lancaster.

Some schools taking the designation of "Ragged" have been charged with a similar kind of "*improvement*," and probably with some degree of fact. This tendency to alter and drift away from the class originally intended to be benefited by this special order of schools has ever had the attention of the Committee of the Ragged School Union, who, to keep the schools to the class, have engaged the services of two gentlemen, who divided the Ragged Schools of London between them, and when they found children in the schools whose circumstances had altered since their admission, as well as those who, when admitted, were not of the right class, to arrange for them to be transferred to schools where a small payment was required, and thus cause vacancies in the Ragged School for the ragged class. The very object of affixing the cognomen "Ragged" to the school was twofold: firstly, to

indicate by the title the class to be admitted; and secondly, to make the school by its title distasteful to any other class. In this way the designation has been of real service, and till the ragged class becomes extinct, it is hoped the designation of "Ragged" to the schools will be retained. When Ragged Schools shall have worked out their mission, and become philanthropic fossils—petrified witnesses of the past, then the Ragged School Union, like the Anti-Corn Law League when the Corn Laws were repealed, may sell off their effects, close their doors, and retire on their well-earned laurels.

To keep to first principles and practice may be difficult, and not always wise. Change of circumstances may cause a change of front, and an altered progression may be the outcome. It seems apparent that change must be the order of the day at Christ's Hospital. The attempted suicide of a "Grecian" by means of phosphorus, and the actual suicide of the scholar W. A. Gibbs, led to the Home Secretary appointing a commission to inquire into the circumstances of the suicide, as well as into the general discipline and management of the schools. The inquiry has been made, and the report of the commission has been presented. That report indicates the impartiality of the commission, as well as their desire to place King Edward's Blue Coat School on a better footing than it has hitherto occupied. Changes in the management must follow. Authority and responsibility must vest in the masters, and especially in the head master instead of the treasurer, not only in the schools, but in the wards. The boy teacher or monitor should be deprived of the power, obtained not so much from rule as from custom, to bully and punish his fellow-scholars composing his ward. That the treatment of the boys has been of an "ultra-Spartan" character is clear from a passage in Coleridge's "Table Talk," p. 171: "August 16, 1832.—Christ's Hospital—Bowyer.—The discipline at Christ's Hospital in my time was ultra-Spartan; all domestic ties were put aside. 'Boy!' I remember Bowyer saying to me once when I was crying, the first day of my return after the holidays,—'Boy! the school is your father! Boy! the school is your mother! Boy! the school is your brother! the school is your sister! the school is your first cousin, your second cousin, and all the rest of your relations! Let's have no more crying!' No tongue can express good Mrs. Bowyer. Val. Le Grice and I were once going to be flogged for some

domestic misdeed, and Bowyer was thundering away at us by way of prologue, when Mrs. B. looked in and said, 'Flog them soundly, sir, I beg!' This saved us. Bowyer was so nettled at the interruption, that he growled out, 'Away woman! away!' and we were let off."

The probability is that far more radical changes await the establishment than is contemplated. These are rather hinted at than stated in the report from the circumstance that such changes scarcely come within the Home Secretary's instructions. The passage in the report we refer to is: "Speaking of the removal of the school into the country, the Commissioners say they should not enter upon this subject were it not that some of their most capable witnesses considered that such removal bears strongly upon the matters into which they were directed to inquire. The Commissioners agree with Mr. Bell and Dr. Haig-Brown that probably all the defects in management and discipline which are complained of at Christ's Hospital, and which cannot be effectually cured while it remains in its present cramped situation, would disappear under the government of an able and judicious head master, if once the school were removed to a spacious site in the country."

The removal, then, of this great boarding-school from Newgate Street into the open country is now the one great requisite, and will be the greatest good resulting from the late inquiry. This effected, another good will probably follow—the removal of the City of London School from the site of Honey Lane Market (an area in feet of less than 100 by less than 200) to the buildings now occupied by the Blue Coat School in Newgate Street.

We have referred to these changes, not on the footing of complaint, but simply as matter of fact. The institutions of Christ's Hospital, Sunday Schools, and British Schools herein referred to are all doing a great and noble work, and our greatest pleasure will be to see them progress, notwithstanding the alteration of the class they teach, with increasing vigour and efficiency, while it will be our endeavour to work on at the base of society, and co-operate with them in leaving the world better than we found it.

GLOSTER HOUSE, GLOSTER SQUARE, UPPER WHITECROSS STREET.

"IN A LONDON COURT."*

THIS is the title of the first Report of one of our new Ragged Schools, superintended—is it strange to say?—by a gentleman in the employ of the School Board for London. Part of the court is represented in our illustration; the school, called the Gloster House Institute, is the principal building of the picture. In the Report we are told that the house derives its name from the supposition that it was erected or possessed by the Dukes of Gloucester; the rumour, however, not being confirmed, so far as can be ascertained, by the pages of old topographers. The house, however, has, it seems, seen better days, for in the beginning of the present century it was the residence of Sir John Eamer, Lord Mayor in 1802, whose works then surrounded his mansion. But the tide of modern change and improvement has passed over the neighbourhood, and the old house now stands almost alone in the midst of the dwellings of the poor.

The situation is undoubtedly a good one, as the work is carried on *among* the people. Yet there are drawbacks. The fact that every one entering the mission door can be seen by all the neighbours necessitates on the part of those who enter sufficient moral courage to bear the remarks of those who are always willing to 'chaff' any one who may wish to fall out of the ranks of his old companions. The noise in the square, very convenient as a playground for the children, is also sometimes a cause of the disturbance of the services. The open square is, however, we learn from the Report, available during the bright days of summer for Open-Air Services, which are held on Sunday mornings from half-past eleven till one.

The history of the undertaking may be thus briefly summarised:—Two young men, Messrs. Samuel Mather and William Cave, having been previously at work in the Whitecross Street district, in connection with the Whitecross Street Christian Mission, while it was under the superintendence of the late Mr. George Vigeon, were, after that gentleman's death, led, in consequence of the circumstances connected with the settlement of the affairs of that Mission, to act as the leaders of a new effort. Their opening services were held at the Banner Street Hall, where they were joined by a small number of volunteers. At first their efforts were confined to conducting religious services on Sunday, for adults and children. The need for week-night meetings, being increasingly felt as the work went on, was met at first by cottage meetings at the houses of a few friends, and afterwards by securing

* "In a London Court: a brief Record of Work among the Poor of Whitecross Street," etc. J. F. Shaw and Son, 48, Paternoster Row. Price 3d.

the lease of their present premises, then occupied as a dwelling-house. But the purchase of the lease and the repairs consequent upon the acquirement of the new premises threw a heavy burthen upon the resources of the little band of workers. Hitherto they had subscribed among themselves the amount necessary in carrying on their work; but this was no longer possible. An appeal was therefore made to the generosity of the Christian public, backed by the names of several well-known gentlemen—viz., S. Morley, Esq., M.P.; Sir Charles Reed; the then Lord Mayor, Mr. Alderman Cotton, M.P.; Alderman Sir A. Lusk, Bart., M.P., and others. The result is thus stated in the Report:—"Five hundred pounds were asked for; not five pounds were given." The work has consequently been crippled from the outset through want of funds; and many times, we are assured, the question has had to be considered, whether it was possible to carry on any longer in the face of a constant pressure of debt. Yet, in spite of the many difficulties, the work has been carried on, and has perhaps prospered the more surely even because it has necessarily been slowly.

Success did not, however, it seems, attend the first public meeting of the new Ragged School. The neighbourhood having been canvassed for scholars, both old and young, it was decided to inaugurate the opening of the school with a tea, succeeded by an entertainment, held at the Banner Street Hall, on Feb. 27, 1876. Five hundred were invited, and the five hundred came. But, in spite of a good tea and the attraction of dissolving views, order could not be secured, and the meeting is frankly said in the Report to have been "not a success." The rough-and-ready scholars were at the beginning more than a match for their teachers. Still the first six weeks after the opening of the Night School were encouraging. The Report records the average attendance to have been "each night about sixty-five boys and about the same number of girls." But with this, as with many other institutions, the start made has not been kept up; for we are told, "As the spring advanced the numbers in attendance fell off, reducing our average attendance for the first six months to about thirty of either sex each night." We are glad to notice in the Report that the facts which tell against the work are neither omitted nor slurred over, and that the causes of failure are also plainly stated. We are sure that the committee of the school have done wisely thus to present to their friends and subscribers with what is called in the Report "a plain, unvarnished history of the work," as, though at the first the record of painful failures as well as glad successes may not prove very interesting reading, yet the fullest and honestest statement of such matters of fact must eventually command the greatest confidence.

The plan upon which the work has been carried out resembles, in

its general features, that of most Ragged Schools and institutes; the greatest reliance being placed upon the principle of self-help, under the blessing of God. In addition to the Night School, in which the ordinary subjects are taught, there have been established for the scholars a Singing Class, Band of Hope, Sewing and Clothing Club, Library, and Savings' Bank. Dissolving-view Entertainments used to be given monthly to the regular scholars, but have unfortunately been discontinued "for want of funds." To provide recreation a Swimming Club and a Cricket Club have been started; the former in 1876, the latter in 1877. We also learn that a Drum and Fife Band has been lately formed. All these means are, however, but "stepping-stones to higher things," being (in the words of the Report) "planned to lead to one end—to show our scholars by our sympathy and love that we have learnt the best of all lessons by sitting, like Mary, at the feet of the Great Teacher." The religious services are, therefore, supplemented by special meetings for all those who wish to live for Jesus; and we are glad to learn that the Great Husbandman has been pleased to give our friends a few tokens that they have not laboured in vain.

The work among the adults has, in like manner, comprised the usual religious services, on Sundays and week nights, consisting of Prayer Meetings, Gospel Meetings, Open-Air Services, and Watch-Night Services. Another instance of the somewhat remarkable frankness which characterises the Report occurs in the detail of these meetings. We are told that on Monday evening a Prayer Meeting is held, the average attendance at which has only been *four*—owing, it is further stated, "to the majority of the workers being at that time engaged in the Night School and in the Loan Society." We are, however, informed that the attendance has since increased to about twenty.

Besides the religious services there is held, on Thursday night, the Gloster Social Class, "for the practice of readings and recitations, songs and glees, discussions and essays." The Report adds: "We hope that in the coming year this class will be increasingly useful in raising the tone of the songs sung in our neighbourhood, and of the readings and recitations given; while, by friendly discussion, we hope to ventilate many important subjects, thus teaching our young men and women to think for themselves, and to clothe their thoughts in fitting words." And on Monday nights are held the meetings of the Gloster Loan and Investment Society, which seems to us to be a society calculated to be of the greatest benefit to the people of the neighbourhood. It is practically a mutual loan society, the profits of which, not being expended upon offices or officers, are shared among the members at Christmas in each year. The working of the society seems simple

enough. The payment upon each share taken up is 6d. a week, payable on Monday nights. If unpaid, a fine of ½d. on each share becomes due. Each member may borrow as often as he pleases, provided any previous loan be repaid, and much larger sums than he has paid in, upon the security of a fellow-member. Interest is charged for each loan at the rate of 5 per cent., the money borrowed being repaid at the rate of one shilling a week for every pound borrowed. If not so repaid, a fine of ½d. is due upon every 10s. borrowed. Each member has, therefore, the command of money during the year, while he is sure that the interest payable for the use of the money is not lost to him, but will be fairly shared out between the members at the close of the year. To make such a society a success two conditions are doubtless indispensable: that the officers of the society, especially the secretary, treasurer, and trustees, should be men of such well-known integrity that their names will be a sufficient guarantee of its financial soundness; and that the loans made are so covered that the society cannot have any bad debts. In both these respects the Gloster Loan and Investment Society seems to have been singularly fortunate. The consequence, we are informed, is that, with nearly 100 members, in no single case will the society actually lose through a bad loan, and that the prospect for next Christmas includes the declaration of a probable dividend of from 20 to 25 per cent. In case of death, also, every member, after six months' membership, has a claim upon the society for a special levy of 6d. from each member to defray the funeral expenses. The Loan Society thus, in some measure, serves as a benefit society.

One means of influencing the masses we regret to find is not in operation—a Temperance Society. The want is mentioned in the Report, and we are told that it is "because we have not the room for large meetings; and the room being small, good speakers can hardly be expected to condescend to our low estate, while we have ourselves as much work in hand as we can well do at all thoroughly." If any of our friends who read this article have it in their power to help our friends in this part of the work, we feel sure that their help would be welcomed.

Having thus glanced through the Report of the Gloster House Institute, we find that a good work has been begun, that the goodwill of the people in the court has been gained, and that some of the children and adults have been brought out from darkness to light; but we also find that the work has been hindered, and much effort left untried, because of the want of funds; and we are sorry to see at the end of the Report that the liabilities still pressing amounted, at the end of last November, to no less than £403 10s. 2d., consisting of accounts due for the refitting and opening of the Institute, together with a loan from

Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., of £150, and a balance due to the hon. superintendent of more than £60. We are glad to learn, however, that some progress has been made during the current year in clearing off some of this heavy debt, and we hope that in the next Report we may have the pleasure of seeing that the liabilities, if not altogether discharged, have been at least considerably diminished.

The Committee of the Ragged School Union in July last voted £20 in aid of this effort. Should our readers feel inclined to render help to this young but very effective institution, they will be assisting earnest men carrying on their labours with skill and zeal. Contributions, if sent to Mr. Gent, 1, Exeter Hall, stating them to be for this school, will be duly forwarded to the treasurer.

THE TEACHER'S WORK: ITS IMPORTANCE AND SOLEMNITY.

THE importance and solemnity of the Sunday-school teacher's work have been much impressed upon my mind lately. The words, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," have sounded in my ears.

Mary Bird is dead! She had lately entered my class, promoted to it rather by her size and years, than by her intelligence or knowledge. I find myself saying, "She was in my class so short a time, and I was busy and interested about others." But it will not do: Mary Bird was in my class, and she is dead! Sunday-school teachers will know how much self-recollection and reproach such words must often call up.

She was a heavy, dull, unintelligent girl, kindly and good-natured, but not impressible, and endowed with a good deal of that passive obstinacy against which it sometimes seems hopeless to strive. She was the child of a much-suffering mother, and of a drunken father. He had starved his children to feed his filthy appetite. Mary had often gone to work with clothes insufficient to keep her from the cold; so when the fever, which had been raging in the parish, entered that cottage, it found an easy prey. There was no strength in that half-starved body to stand against the terrible fever. It coursed through her veins, and soon burnt the life out. The minister visited her, but speech, hearing, sight, all were gone. He came down from the sick chamber, and spoke words of solemn warning to the poor wretched drivelling father—another exhortation added to the many he had already given. All this time God was speaking in the house. Then they knelt down, with the dying child above them, to pray for both the dying and the living, to Him to whom all things are possible.

The next day the child died. When I saw her all sense was gone. I spoke to her, though she could not speak, and prayed with her, though probably she could not hear; for what would one not do in a forlorn hope? She was greatly changed in the few days of her illness. I should not have known her.

Yes, Mary Bird is dead, and she was in my class. "Only a little time, and such an uninteresting child." It will not do. When I admitted her into my class, I thereby pledged myself to care for her, to give her more than routine instruction, to try to win and allure her to Jesus, to give her a place in my prayers.

And this I know I have not done. And now Mary Bird is dead, and my prayers cannot follow or benefit her, and anything that I can do now will make no amends.

The relation between me and her is past for ever, the present cannot alter it. It is true I could not know that she would die so soon; that she, the last added to my class, would be the first taken away from it; if I could have known it, of course I would have spared no effort to bring her to Jesus. But I did not know it, and I did little for her, beyond mere routine, and now she is beyond my reach, and yet she was in my class.

Ah! a Sunday-school teacher's is a solemn work. If it be done at all, it must be done with all the heart. I do not think that I *unduly* exalt it, when I say that it is of the same nature as the minister's work: we are the children's ministers; our work has the same interest, the same responsibility; we strive after the same instruments, we look for the same help, we anticipate the same rewards.

I say again, we are the children's ministers. And since we have the minister's joys, and the minister's hopes, we must exercise the minister's faithfulness, or we shall miss our reward.

Our work is voluntary. We take its blessed burden upon ourselves. We must not think that therefore any service will do, because we are volunteers. It must be the best that our powers enable us to render. There must be no more slighting of the *un*interesting child, no weariness with the dull and obstinate new scholar. We know not what her home trials may be, to what brutalising influences she may be subject, how the growing child may be stunted by hunger and cold, and the body may affect the mind.

Yes, the work, if it be done at all, must be done well. It should not be taken up to please this person or that, but from a deep sense of our indebtedness to the Great Master, and after a deliberate counting of the cost. They who put their hands to God's work, must do so reverently, and not lightly withdraw them. Of course, circumstances may alter, and those altered circumstances may forbid our carrying on

the work; but while we do carry it on, it must be in solemn, serious earnest.

I say this to myself, as I think of my poor scholar.

I know it is hard work often. Difficult in the bitter winter mornings, and when the school is at a distance from us, to be always in time; difficult, when the body is below par, or the mind unstrung, or the weather unfavourable, to be present at all; but if it be *possible*, we must be regular and punctual in our attendance. We must face the difficulties, and we shall find them lessen. The Master was never lukewarm in His work. The thought of our class sitting ready and expectant, while the other classes are in full progress, ought to weigh with us, when we feel disposed to delay a little, or to absent ourselves on any light occasion.

But I return to what I have said: ours is solemn, weighty, blessed work. Up-hill work, indeed, I grant you, having in it much discouragement and difficulty, but still full of joy, full of promise, full of present reward, full of hope for the future. Let us, then, when we do it, do it heartily and well. Let us do it as unto the Lord. Let us have regard to each child, and try to take each into our heart, and plead with God for each, lest again we may be obliged sorrowing to say—Mary Bird was in my class, and I warned her not, and she is dead.

EXHIBITION OF CHILDREN'S WORK.

King Edward Ragged Schools.

The annual exhibition of articles made by the scholars of the King Edward Ragged and Industrial Schools was recently held in the school in King Edward Street. The exhibition was open on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 7 till 10, but as many persons were unable to obtain admission on the first night of opening, it was again thrown open on Thursday evening.

The room was decorated with flowers, flags, &c. Upwards of 200 chromo-lithographs (lent by the hon. superintendent) were tastefully arranged on shelves covered with scarlet cloth.

In addition to the articles made by the children, a number of interesting objects from China, Africa, and America were lent by friends of the institution. There were also a number of splendid rustic models, lent by Messrs. Hammer, of the Strand, and a lithographic press by Messrs. Winstone, of Shoe Lane, on which was being printed the prize-cards in five colours, designed for the Committee of the Ragged School Union by Mr. C. Montague.

One hundred and seventy-three scholars from the Ragged School in

King Edward Street, the Industrial Home (No. 1) in Albert Street, and the Industrial Home (No. 2) at Cambridge Heath, gave in specimens of their work, consisting of 223 articles. Amongst those made by the boys was a beautiful mohagany table, inlaid with coloured wood, forming a bouquet of roses, a mahogany washstand, a lady's easy-chair, four mahogany boxes, some well-made boots, a model farm in glass case, several models of villages, an aquarium, a cottage and a butcher's shop, with joints, shopman, &c.

The girls exhibited some excellent specimens of plain needlework, darning, knitting, marking, tailoring, laundry work, doll dressing, &c., while those girls who are working at businesses took in samples of their work. A model of "Uncle Tom" singing to the blind girl at the King Edward Schools was cleverly made by one of the girls at the Ragged Schools, and commanded the attention of the visitors on entering the building. It appears that "Uncle Tom," the day before he was presented to the Queen at Windsor, went down to the schools and addressed the children; amongst them was a little blind girl, to whom he spoke very kindly, and said, "As you cannot see my face, my dear, perhaps you would like to hear me sing." The model represents "Uncle Tom" singing, with a group of girls in front dressed as school-children. See page 66.

The two first nights the exhibition was open upwards of 1,400 persons visited it, all of whom were admitted free by ticket. The pleasure and gratification afforded to so large a number of people, as well as the good done to the children by bringing out their skill and ingenuity, we hope will be some compensation to the teachers of the schools for the time and trouble of getting it up.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

It is now more than thirty years since the following sentence was written in one of the early reports of the Ragged School Union:—

> "Looking forward to the time when the State may be able to do far more to improve the moral habits of the poor by Industrial Schools, Reformatories, and other institutions."

At that period magistrates and judges, when guilt had been legally proved, had no power to discriminate between cases of young and helpless victims of parental neglect when brought before them, and adults who trampled on the law despite of their age, experience, and early educational advantages. Criminals, young and old, were treated as if the same degree of responsibility attached to both, and were, to

a large extent, hustled together into the common prison, which, as then directed, might be viewed as a sort of high school for the graduation of the wretched pupils in the most skilful methods of practising violence and dishonesty.

Thirty-eight years ago M. De Metz commenced a new era by establishing at Mettray a school for the reformation of juvenile delinquents. This institution attracted the attention of many in England interested in the welfare of the wayward juvenile. The Rev. Sidney Turner, then the Chaplain of the Philanthropic Society, visited the new school, and published a pamphlet on the subject. The result was that twenty-eight years since a school similar to that at Mettray was formed by the Philanthropic Society at Redhill, Surrey. Parliament gave its imprimatur to this movement by passing the Juvenile Offenders' Act in 1854. Three years after, the institutions under the Act were of sufficient importance and extent to render it necessary for the Government to appoint an inspector. The Rev. Sidney Turner having been active in the movement, and having been the means of establishing the school at Redhill, was considered the most eligible man for the new post, and therefore became the first inspector to carry out the provisions of that Act. That appointment he held for nineteen years, and then, from ill health, resigned it. His successor is William Inglis, and his first report is now before us, and which is the twentieth of the series.

This report treats first of REFORMATORIES, and states that during the year there has been no addition to these schools, nor is it likely there will be any new ones, as the existing number seems fully sufficient for the requirements of the country. The probability is that their number will rather lessen than increase. In many the numbers of inmates under detention have been diminishing, and this decrease may go on till some of the Reformatories will give up their certificates from want of inmates.

The number of Reformatory Schools in England is 53, and in Scotland 12. Of these 3 are afloat—viz., the training-ships *Cornwall* on the Thames, off Purfleet, and the *Akbar* and *Clarence* on the Mersey, off Liverpool. The numbers under detention at the close of last year were—

	Boys.	Girls.
England:		
Protestant	3,325	795
Roman Catholic	1,154	176
Scotland:		
Protestant	723	135
Roman Catholic	200	106
	5,402	1,212

Of these

On licence	739	132
In prison	13	6
Absconded (not recovered)	71	19
	823	157

These numbers, compared with those of the year preceding, show a decrease of 4 boys and 47 girls.

The *admissions* in 1876 were 1,266 boys and 254 girls, showing an increase on 1875 of 77 boys.

The *discharges* were 1,268 boys and 298 girls.

The *total admissions* from the passing of the Juvenile Offenders' Act, 1854, to the end of 1876, were 25,005 boys and 5,977 girls.

The *total discharges* in the same period were 19,601 boys and 4,762 girls.

Of these were

	Boys.	Girls.
Placed in service	6,339	2,562
Emigrated	1,889	118
Gone to sea	2,980	—
Enlisted	513	—
Died	555	221
Absconded (not recovered)	749	185
	13,025	3,086

The second part of the report is devoted to

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

The number certified is 118, of which 115 are actually at work—viz., in England, 86; and in Scotland, 29.

The numbers of inmates were—

England:

	Boys.	Girls.
Protestant	6,028	1,267
Roman Catholic	1,494	524
Scotland:		
Protestant	2,671	999
Roman Catholic	306	186
	10,499	2,976

Of these

On licence	634	156
Absconded (not recovered)	108	22
	742	178

These numbers show an increase on 1875 of 275 boys and 22 girls.

The *admissions* in 1876 were 2,809 boys and 654 girls.

The *discharges* were 2,084 boys and 586 girls.

The *total* admissions to Dec. 31, 1876, were 24,770 boys and 7,249 girls.

The *total* discharges were, in the same period, 14,248 boys and 4,252 girls.

In last year the School Boards in England sent to Industrial Schools 1,049 children for vagrancy, and 419 as uncontrollable.

The report closes with a few remarks on DAY INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS, and states that: "Of the working of the system it is not possible at present to form a decided opinion. It may reasonably be hoped that the establishment of such schools may tend to lessen the committals to Industrial Schools, and lighten the expense to the country, and with less interference with the liberty of the children themselves. It will in some degree meet the cases of truant children, which up to the present time have swelled the lists of our Industrial Boarding Schools. The application of this principle will be chiefly confined to large and populous neighbourhoods, at any rate for the present."

This report, though useful and interesting, is not comprehensive. We find in it no reference to similar institutions doing precisely the same kind of work for the wayward and neglected youth of the country. In vain do we search among the 310 pages of this report for the slightest reference to such Industrial Schools and Training Ships as those conducted by the Committee of the National Refuges and the *Chichester* and *Arethusa* on the Thames off Greenhithe. This committee alone has under its training upwards of 1,000 of these waifs and strays of society, and because they and others, although doing a similar work, yet because they do not take money voted by Parliament in support of Reformatories and Industrial Schools, are not deemed worthy of a kindly word of recognition by the Government officials. The report is so far incomplete, and to strangers to the fact, and especially to foreigners, it is misleading.

They conclude that an official document, issued by the Government, would embrace the whole effort, whereas it only touches upon one-half of it. A pamphlet lies before us published by the Reformatory and Refuge Union in 1877, which gives a list of the institutions in Great Britain. This list shows the institutions to number 486, and the inmates 39,172. The Government report gives particulars only of 180 institutions having 20,089 inmates. It is, however, only fair to say the area is not the same, as the Government report does not include Ireland and the other does. But adding the full numbers relating to Ireland to the Government report, and so making the area the same in both, the Government report would still fall short by 232 institutions and 13,203 inmates.

In relation to the topics detailed in the Government report, the *Daily Telegraph* says:—

"Considering that the apparatus of Reformatories and Industrial Institutions has not yet been at work for the space of a single generation, the results must be regarded as remarkably promising. Two generations more must elapse before a very marked contrast can be expected to appear between the present and the future. Nevertheless, the method now adopted as resulting from these agencies for the elimination of dangerous social elements is unquestionably sound, and will certainly be followed in process of time by a material diminution of pauperism and crime."

NIGHT RAGGED SCHOOLS: VISITATION AND GRANTS IN AID.

To Managers of Ragged Schools.

The Committee of the Ragged School Union are convinced that there are many thousands of young people in London that greatly need the aid Night Schools alone can give to fit them for a useful discharge of their respective duties.

In consequence of the efforts made during the winter of 1876-7, the increase of average attendance at Night Schools over that of 1875-6 was 2,099. The numbers were respectively 6,683 and 8,782. The Committee hope for a similar, if not a larger, increase in the winter of 1877-8 as compared with that of 1876-7.

The School Board is freely supplying the means of education for boys and girls of a younger age than those for whom Night Schools are provided. These are intended for youths of both sexes of twelve years of age and upwards, and specially for the destitute and neglected portions of that class.

On pages 9 and 10 we gave full particulars of the grants in aid the Parent Committee were willing, under certain conditions, to vote. It is there stated that should a Night School be able to keep the average attendance to twenty, and £10 paid to the master, or £8 to the mistress per annum for each night in the week employed, the Committee would be prepared to vote two-thirds of such salaries. The Committee of the Union at their last meeting decided to supplement the aid there proposed by offering to help small Night Schools, the conductors of which have tried to get, but failed to obtain, the average of twenty. They, however, still think that *twenty should be the minimum average consistent with satisfaction.* Nevertheless, they desire to bear some portion of the expense of conducting a school of a smaller average, provided the school is in all other respects satisfactorily carried on.

The labour in conducting a small school is much less than in one where the numbers are full. The salary therefore should vary with the average. It is suggested that for a school with fifteen to twenty in average attendance, the salary to a master should not exceed £7 per year for each night in the week he conducts it, or £5 if a mistress. Should the average attendance be only from ten to fifteen, then £4 to the master per year for each night he conducts it, or £3 if a mistress. In such cases the Parent Committee will consider any application that they may receive with a view to voting aid not exceeding two-thirds of the payment actually made to the teachers.

The Committee are also desirous of aiding the local friends and teachers by the *personal* assistance of their school agents, Mr. Curtis and Mr. Kirk. For this purpose the Night Schools of the metropolis are divided into four sections, East, West, North, and South. The visits of these gentlemen may be expected in the following order:—

	Mr. Curtis.		Mr. Kirk.
October	North and East London	.....	South and West London
November	East and South ,,	.....	West and North ,,
December	South and West ,,	.....	North and East ,,
January	West and North ,,	.....	East and South ,,
February	North and East ,,	.....	South and West ,,
March.....	East and South ,,	.....	West and North ,,
April	South and West ,,	.....	North and East ,,
May	West and North ,,	.....	East and South ,,

By this arrangement each agent will have the same district under his charge for two consecutive months, and by the gradual progress each will have had the same schools under his cognisance for a second two months during the season. The whole of the schools will therefore have had the benefit of the advice and council of both the agents. The Committee have made this arrangement in the interest of the schools, and will be glad if the friends and teachers of the respective schools will give these gentlemen their full confidence and kindly receive their co-operation.

Circumstances may occur to render it desirable for the agents to give special and frequent visits to a school at work, or to pay special attention to the preliminaries of a school in course of formation, or to any other effort, the object of which is the extension or improvement of the Night Schools; in such cases a line on the subject addressed to the Secretary, 1, Exeter Hall, will receive immediate attention.

A DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

An excursion to green fields away from the din and smoke of the great city has become quite an institution. Railways, steamboats, tram lines, vans, and omnibuses have all been under requisition to

convey the excursionists to their destination and back. Some of these outings have been at the invitation and expense of individuals, and others of a more general kind to some public or semi-public places, given by means of funds raised expressly for that purpose.

Two hundred inmates of

THE KING EDWARD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS,

in Mile End and Cambridge Heath, were invited by the treasurer of those institutions, H. R. Williams, Esq., to spend a long summer's day at his residence at Highgate. The day fixed was 11th of July, when the weather was all that could be desired for such a purpose. In addition to the 200 girls and their teachers there was a large gathering of friends and supporters. The Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., was present, and presided at the luncheon in the marquee. The friends of the institutions availed themselves of this opportunity to present to the Treasurer an illuminated address beautifully mounted for the drawing-room table, and expressive of their appreciation of the great services rendered by Mr. Williams during the lengthened period of about thirty years in the varied offices of teacher, secretary, superintendent, and treasurer. The address was read by J. H. Lloyd, Esq., the hon. secretary, and the testimonial was presented by Lord Shaftesbury. Mr. Williams had been kept in ignorance of this part of the day's proceedings, and was therefore taken by surprise. He gracefully acknowledged the kindness of his friends as expressed in the address, and by the presentation, and thanked them for such a recognition of his services.

Sir George Osborne presided when Lord Shaftesbury left, and Lady Osborne distributed the prizes to the girls that during the year had manifested ability and good conduct. These prizes consisted of books, workboxes, money, &c. Medals were also awarded to several, who would in consequence fill certain posts of usefulness in the school, and if the medals be retained for the next twelve months, they would bear a money value at the end.

The grounds were furnished with swings, balls, and various appliances for games suitable for girls. As the sun was nearing the western horizon the young people were gathered, sang some of their school songs and hymns, and after a few cheery words of encouragement by kind friends commenced their return journey home, evidently grateful for the kindness shown to them.

THE TEACHERS' EXCURSION.

The Committee of the Ragged School Union gave invitations to the teachers to spend a day with them in the country. The day fixed was July 21st, and the weather was very pleasant in all respects.

Through the kindness of the Society's treasurer, R. C. L. Bevan, Esq., the day was spent in Trent Park, near Barnet. Special carriages were attached to a morning train, which took the major part of the company from King's Cross to Barnet; thence the friends had a pleasant walk across the fields to Mr. Bevan's park. After a few words of congratulation the friends dispersed to the hayfields, to the gardens and pleasant shady walks, while others formed little companies and were soon engaged in cricket, swings, and other games. Dinner was due at 1.30, when the marquee began to fill. In less than an hour this repast was over, and the friends again dispersed, a large proportion of whom, led by one of the men-servants, took a tour through the wood skirting the park, which nearly occupied the time till tea was ready. The marquee was evidently more full than at the dinner. In the meantime many other friends had arrived from London, as business permitted, to join the company. H. R. Williams, Esq., presided, and after tea stated that they were indebted to the Committee for the present pleasant opportunity of spending a day together; they were indebted to their friend Mr. Bevan for the favour of spending the day in one another's company in such a quiet and health-giving retreat as Trent Park; and they were indebted to Mr. Gent, their secretary, and those associated with him, for the completeness of the details by which the rendezvous was reached readily, every want anticipated, and by which the day had passed with so much comfort and pleasure. Votes of thanks were passed with acclamamation, after a few kind words from those who moved and seconded them, to Mr. Bevan, the Committee, to Mr. Gent, and the Chairman. Mr. Gent and the Chairman responded. A deputation at once conveyed the vote to Mr. Bevan, who had just arrived at the house from London.

The evening sun began to make the shadows long, indicating the time for the return journey had arrived. The whole of the friends returned home without an incident to mar the day's happiness, save the loss of the return train by a part of the company who had lingered a little too long in crossing the fields, and arrived at the station in time to see the train go without them, and they had to wait half an hour for the next.

The Children's Excursion.

It being understood that there was a probability of some of the Ragged Schools not being able to give the children attending them a "day in the country," led to a special effort, as in former years, being made by the officers of the Parent Society to raise the needful funds and give the children of those schools an invitation and provide for them refreshments and toys. To help them to do so Lord Shaftesbury kindly wrote the following appeal note:—

"June 11th, 1877.

"The fine weather reminds me of the application I have annually made to your bounty, for many years, in aid of a fund to give some thousands of ragged children the pleasure and benefits of a day in the country.

"I need not say more than that it has been a great enjoyment and a positive blessing to them.

"Your obedient servant,

"SHAFTESBURY.

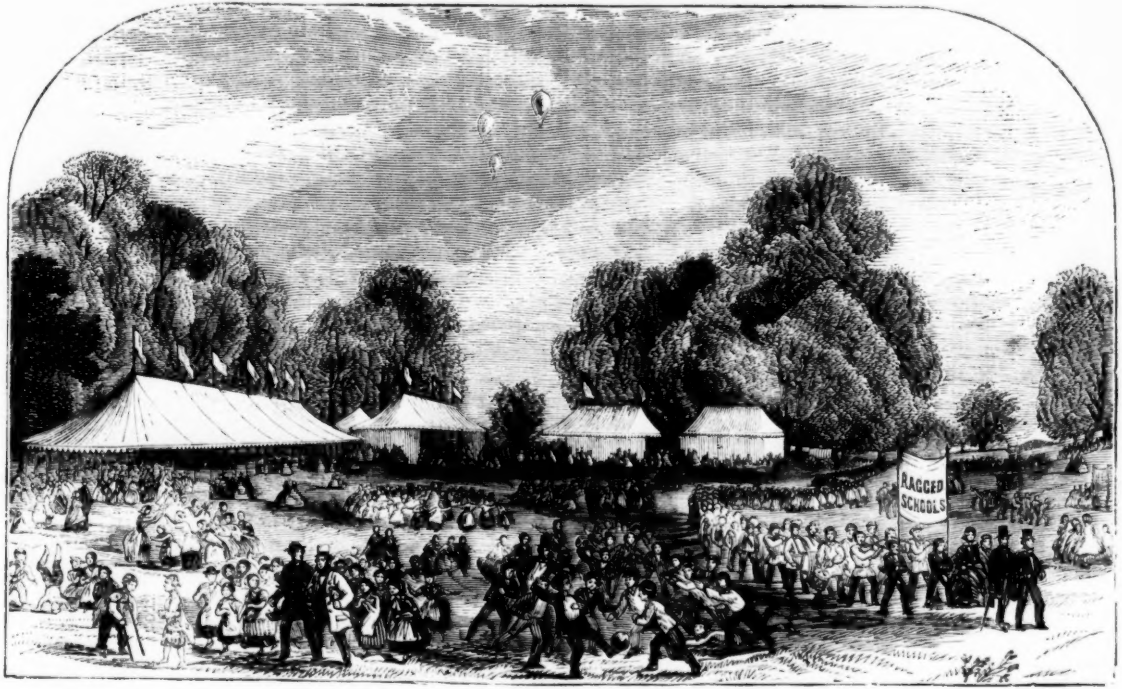
"P.S.—Contributions sent to Mr. Gent, at No. 1, Exeter Hall, W.C., will be gratefully acknowledged."

This note was issued to a few friends, who kindly responded.

The day fixed was July 27th, and the place chosen was Richmond Park. The weather for such an occasion was all-important, and it was all that could be wished. The children from seventeen schools were taken in vans from the school-house to the park-gates, and the ride through London and along the country roads and lanes gave perhaps the greatest portion of the day's delights. Two schools found it more convenient to use the railways. The number of children that participated in this holiday was 1,745, and the number of friends in charge of them was 145, so that arrangements and provision had to be made for 1,890 individuals. The whole was done and completed without a mishap to lessen the day's enjoyment.

A HOLIDAY FOR MOTHERS.

The children have their day in the country, and the fathers have their "bean-feasts," but very little has been done of a similar kind for the mothers, and yet it would seem that they need a change even more than the children or their fathers. The children are at school or in the streets; they spend but a small part of their time indoors. The fathers are out from home for five and a half days per week following their several occupations as the bread-winners for the family till evening, and thus have a change of place and company; but the mothers have to spend their lives indoors from morning till night, seven days to the week, and all the year round. A holiday of "a day in the country" is perhaps a greater change to, and more needed by, them than by any other individuals of the community. Such a thought seemed to impress Lord Shaftesbury's mind, and induced him, before leaving London in the autumn for Ireland, to try and get something done for a few of them. He entrusted the carrying out of his wishes to Mr. Gent, who, through Mrs. Parlebean, the teacher of the Fleet Ditch Ragged School, Little Saffron Hill, invited between fifty and sixty of the



SEVENTEEN RAGGED SCHOOLS IN RICHMOND PARK, JULY 27, 1877.

mothers of the children of that school to spend a great part of a summer's day on the Thames and in Battersea Park. They assembled on the landing-stage at Blackfriars Bridge and rode to Woolwich, had their dinners on board, and came back by the same boat to Westminster Bridge, where they changed boats and went up the river to the park; there a good hearty tea awaited them, and they, from their long water-ride of twenty miles or more, had first-class appetites to enjoy it. After tea Mr. Gent said a few cheery words to encourage them in their daily toils and domestic cares, and then gave to each woman a shilling and a book. The shilling was considered to be about the sum that would have been earned had they stayed at home, and it was desired there should be no loss but all gain by the day's outing.

The books, ten different kinds, had been selected and sent by Lord Shaftesbury, who also provided the shillings and paid for the boats and the tea.

One of the women, on behalf of the rest, thanked Lord Shaftesbury and Mr. Gent for the day's pleasure, and for all the kind and thoughtful arrangements of the day. That this gratitude was more than verbal was made clear some three weeks after. The school for that time had a recess, and the teacher having accepted an invitation from a lady at Retford to spend her holiday at her residence, retired to the country to recruit health and strength. On the morning of reopening her school the place seemed more than usually lively. The children were there in large number and seemed glad to get back to school, and in addition several well-known women and a few others. At first it was thought they attended on some business relating to their children's schooling, but the real object was soon apparent. The mothers, who had enjoyed the excursion on the water, had decided to give expression to their gratitude in something more than words, and had settled among themselves to give a few pence each to buy some useful article and present it to Mrs. Parlebean in recognition of her uniform kindness to them and their children, but specially as a memento of "a day upon the water." The article was a well-made pretty leather reticule, inside of which was a leather purse, and in the purse one shilling and one sixpence. It appears the money was the balance of the subscription after paying for the bag and purse. A letter accompanied the present, and which bore the signatures of thirty-three of the mothers.

Soon after the excursion just named Mr. Gent had some money placed at his disposal for holiday purposes, which enabled him to propose another fifty women connected with the Nelson Street School, Camberwell, going out to spend a good portion of a day together. In

this case the water-trip was to Battersea Park and back, with a good tea in the open. While seated on the grass sipping their tea the subject of "Mother's Meetings and their benefits" was introduced to the women. To some the topic was new, others had elsewhere than in Nelson Street enjoyed the advantages of those meetings. The result was an attempt to begin one under the superintendence of a lady, aided by the missionary. To the first meeting nine of the women came, and at the second seventeen were present. Of course there were several little ones, but these were amused with a few toys while the mothers went on with their stitching, and at the same time listened to the reading of a useful book. On leaving, a copy of "The Mother's Friend" was lent to each for home reading.

Youths' and Men's Class.

By means of a little help from the same source the Youths' and Men's Class in Nelson Street had the opportunity of spending a long half-day on Tooting Common. On arrival it was evident that cricket was to be the all absorbing game. Some had, perhaps, never before held a cricket-bat in a real game. After some good running tea was announced as ready, and in picnic style they enjoyed a strong cup of tea, which they did not fail to notice, with a good supply of cake and bread-and-butter; a hearty meal was made, and then cricket renewed till darkness closed the sport. During tea the missionary gave a little address on "Service," "Choose ye whom ye will serve"—real service, not pretence, which elicited the remark from one, "We believe, Mr. Farmer, all you says, you does."

Wandsworth Boys' Home and Surrey Industrial Schools.

We commenced by a reference to the holiday given to the Industrial School *girls*, and we close by one to the holiday given the Industrial School *boys*. Thursday, September the 10th, was fixed for the inmates of the Boys' Home, Wandsworth, to meet the boys of the Surrey Industrial Schools at Byfleet. The occasion was the Harvest Home festival of the latter institution. From Wandsworth 180 lads travelled to Addlestone by South-Western Railway, where waggons were ready to convey the boys, and conveyances for the teachers, to Byfleet Corner. The Byfleet boys were drawn up in two lines, one on each side of the road, and gave the Wandsworth boys a right hearty reception as they marched between them into the field where were two large marquees and two tents, with swings, cricket-ground, and racing course. The morning was occupied by a great variety of games, in which the whole of the nearly 400 boys seemed to be engaged. An early and hearty dinner was requisite after a five o'clock

breakfast, a long ride into the country, and such free exercise in the field. The meat, vegetables, and pudding having disappeared, the games were renewed with redoubled energy, to be followed by a good drill of the two schools. There was wheeling into line, forming open column, marching past in quick and double time, &c. This exercise closed by one school forming a line on one side of the field, the other school on the opposite side, and at a signal the opposing forces met in the middle, where a struggle took place to see which could carry off the largest number of prisoners from the opposite party. Tea was now due and heartily enjoyed. The next step of the programme was the distribution of prizes to the lads to whom they had been awarded for good conduct, painstaking effort, and efficiency in their several departments. The prizes were distributed by Mr. Alderman Ellis, who said a few kind words to each prize-taker. He then gave a little address to the whole of the boys, congratulating those who then held their prizes in their hands, and encouraging those who had looked on to try and be prize-takers on the next occasion. The Rev. Newton J. Spicer, the rector of Byfleet, Mr. John Leyland, the hon. manager of the two institutions, and Mr. Gent, of the Ragged School Union, gave short addresses before the lads dispersed preparatory to the return home. Each school had its own brass band, which took turns during the day to entertain the company, which was larger than usual.

BOOKS, AND WHAT IS THOUGHT OF THEM.

THE LIFE OF THOMAS WRIGHT, OF MANCHESTER, THE PRISON PHILANTHROPIST. *John Heywood, Deansgate, Manchester; and Simpkin and Marshall, London.*

THE authorship is not stated on the title-page, but we gather from the following pages the author is Mr. Thos. Wright McDermid, a grandson of Thomas Wright.

We are not in love with ponderous volumes, with their subjects so spun out that scarcely leaves a thought to be added by the reader. The volume before us errs, if an error it be, in the other direction. It is, indeed, a *multum in parvo.* In the space of less than 100 small leaded pages we have the records of a life as remarkable, as useful, and as unostentatious and humble, as widely-known and appreciated. A life, too, that extended to the almost patriarchal length of eighty-five years, nearly sixty of which he was a devoted disciple of the Lord Jesus. The preface was written by Lord Shaftesbury, in which he says: "The first time I ever saw Thomas Wright was at the house of our friend Sir W. Fairbairn. We three dined together before going

to church. I was much struck by his appearance and manner. His slight, thin form, dressed in black, his white hair, and singularly attractive expression of countenance, gave him the air of an apostolic doctor of divinity, and I found his conversation in harmony with his looks. A few days afterwards I went with Sir W. Fairbairn to see our friend and colleague at his place of work in Manchester. Suddenly there stood before me a man in a brown-paper cap, with an apron, and all the apparatus of industry about him. The outer man was completely changed; nothing remained but the expression of countenance, which no one could mistake. Here, then, was Thomas Wright, who, in his leisure hours, had carried, and who was still carrying, by God's grace, knowledge and consolation to the inmost recesses of every prison in that vast city. I have never been impressed, before or since, so deeply as I was then, with the Christian dignity of honest labour."

The book is embellished with a photograph of Thomas Wright, and as it was our happiness to be personally acquainted with our late friend, we have no hesitation in pronouncing it to be extremely good. It is life-like, with, as Lord Shaftesbury says, "the air of an apostolic doctor of divinity," and not as the foreman of Messrs. Ormerod's ironworks.

To Thomas Wright belongs the honour of being the founder of Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies, the necessities for which had painfully impressed his own mind, coming as they did from time to time under his observation. The one related as a specimen of many cases was the following. "There was a man, of sailor-like appearance, who got work at his foundry; he was a steady, careful, and industrious workman, who had obtained the favourable notice of his employers. Through some unknown means it oozed out that the man was a discharged convict, and one day the proprietor asked Thomas Wright, who then occupied a responsible position in the foundry, whether he was cognisant of the fact. Mr. Wright promised to speak to the man, and in the course of the day he took a casual opportunity of saying to him, 'My man, where did you work last?' 'I've been abroad,' was the reply. But after some conversation the poor fellow, with tears in his eyes, admitted that he was a returned convict; that he was desirous of not relapsing into his old ways; and, doubting his ability to procure work if he told the truth, he had carefully endeavoured to conceal the stigma which attached to his character, hoping by honest perseverance in the right way to wipe it out. Convinced that the man was sincere in his intentions, Mr. Wright acquainted his employers with his past history, and begged that the man might be retained in his employment, offering to become

responsible for his good behaviour, and to place £20 in the employers' hands as a guarantee for the poor fellow's conduct. A promise was given that the man should be retained, but on the following day he was missing, and, on inquiry, it was found that he had been paid off and discharged the night before, the order for his dismissal, through inadvertence, not having been countermanded. Mr. Wright at once sent to the man's lodgings, when it was found that he had left his lodgings at five o'clock in the morning with all he had in a bundle under his arm. Mr. Wright discovered the man had taken the road to Bury, and at once set out on foot to overtake him. The poor heart-broken and wretched being was found resting by the roadside two miles out of Manchester and brought back and reinstated in his employment. His subsequent conduct amply justified the action taken by his rescuer."

This incident fairly sets forth Mr. Wright's moral influence over erring humanity, inducing penitence, exciting confidence, and leaving no effort untried till the object to be saved was fairly rescued.

In a memorandum, dated August, 1854, Mr. Wright says: "I cannot tell the number of discharged prisoners I relieved some years before 1847. I am sorry I did not keep an account of them. I was what the world calls a 'go-ahead' man, full of zeal and earnestness. From April, 1847, to August 11th, 1854, I have assisted 941 discharged prisoners and convicts to go abroad, besides providing many others who had returned from transportation with the means of going home and to where they could get employment."

We have, it is hoped, said enough to induce our friends to become more fully acquainted with the prison philanthropist by ordering a copy of "The Life of Thomas Wright," and when read send it on to the lending library of a neighbouring school or working men's club; or, what would be better, order two copies—one to present as suggested, the other for home use and to lend to friends as occasion serves. No one can read this invaluable little book without rising from the perusal with the prayerful aspiration, "Let me live the life of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

LIFE IN THE SOUTHERN ISLES; OR, SCENES AND INCIDENTS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND NEW GUINEA. By the Rev. W. W. Gill, B.A. *Religious Tract Society.*

The author gave the last stroke of his pen to this interesting and instructive book less than twelve months since. It describes places "unknown to the world four years ago," and portions were recently read to the Royal Geographical Society. It is then a *new* book. It touches upon what is known, or supposed to be known, and can be gathered of the Polynesian peoples, for the last three or four centuries. But its great value is the clear, unvarnished records of the introduction of Christianity among people sunk to

the lowest depths of heathenism, idolatry, and cannibalism. "Three score years and ten" have not passed since the whole of the Pacific was in these "lowest depths," but the *Christian* will be glad to learn from this book that more than *three hundred islands* are Christianised; *merchants* will be glad to learn that new markets are opened up for their merchandise, and which is already estimated to reach £3,000,000 a year; the *philanthropist* will be glad to know that education is rapidly advancing—at least half a million natives are under instruction, and of whom sixty thousand are gathered into church-fellowship. So well do these understand the duties as well as the privileges of this membership that, wherever a community is ministered to by a native pastor, he is sustained, not by contributions drawn from Europe or America, but by the freewill offerings of his own people. "Comparisons are" said to be "odious," but contrasts are sometimes very instructive, and this book gives one. "All this has, under God, been done by various Protestant missionary societies at little more than the total cost of the Alexandra Palace—less than a million sterling!"

The eighth chapter is devoted to "Miscellanea," and gives many direct and reflex evidences of the great changes that have come over the peoples of the South Sea Islands, all of which deserve careful reading.

From another source, *Evangelical Christendom*, we give collateral and very remarkable evidence of these marvellous changes. Mr. Gill was appointed twenty-five years since to labour in the Hervey Islands, while the Rev. John Thomas was appointed to labour in the Friendly Islands more than fifty years ago. Of this missionary's life's work a national recognition was made last year by the King of Tonga, who appointed by proclamation a public holiday in commemoration of the jubilee of Mr. Thomas's entry into his dominions. The text of the proclamation is as follows:—

Secretary's Office, Nukualofa, June 24, 1876.

In consequence of Wednesday, the 28th inst., being the anniversary of the arrival, fifty years ago, of the Rev. John Thomas, the founder of the Wesleyan Mission in the Friendly Islands, and in consideration of the many advantages derived from the establishment of that Mission, and the progress which has been made, his Majesty has been pleased to proclaim Wednesday, June 28, as a public holiday. All the Government offices will therefore be closed; and his Majesty requests that all foreign residents trading here, and employing Tongan labour, will observe the holiday as far as practicable.

A gun will be fired at sunrise and one at sunset; also a Royal salute of twenty-one guns at noon.

By his Majesty's command,

J. P. MILLER, Secretary to the Privy Council.

God save the King!

In connection with this grateful recognition of Mr. Thomas's labours, and the great civil and spiritual benefits conferred upon the Friendly Islanders by Christianity, there is reported a revival of the work in the Tonga Circuit. Two hundred members have been added to the Church, four or five new handsome sanctuaries are to be built, a new hall for the

college is to be erected, and in sundry other profitable ways the jubilee will be further commemorated. In the midst of the jubilant rejoicings of King George and his grateful subjects, the apostolic labours of this venerable servant of God, now eighty-two years of age, are not to be overlooked or forgotten. A substantial proof thereof is soon to be in the possession of him who, under God, has been the means of founding in Tonga a mission, the fruit of which is seen to-day in a Christian king reigning over a Christian kingdom. We may add that the Friendly Islands Mission has been more than self-supporting for several years, and that the native Christians now contribute from £1,000 to £2,000 per annum to the Wesleyan Mission funds over the actual expenditure in carrying on the work in their midst.

We do not often wander to subjects and regions beyond our special work, and we think the subject of Mr. Gill's book has not led us far astray. The bringing of the Gospel to the ignorant and neglected has ever been the great object of our movement, and that is the great topic of this book—we, in this north-easterly portion of the globe, and Mr. Gill in the south-westerly. We have no hesitation in saying that no library of missions and travels will be complete without a copy of this valuable volume, and every reader will be gratified to find it embellished by seventy illustrations.

Notices of Meetings.

LAMBETH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The annual meeting and distribution of prizes to the children took place at the Horns Assembly Rooms, under the presidency of the Rev. J. M'Connel Hussey, M.A.

The meeting was opened by prayer and by the children singing the hymn, "O God of Bethel." After the secretary's report had been read, addresses were delivered by the Revs. C. Campe, M.A., and H. E. Stone. Mr. Mark J. Stewart, M.P., then delivered an address, in which he hoped to give some assistance and guidance to those engaged in the useful work of Sunday School teaching. They should go to their work in the spirit of Christ. Their time is the Lord's time. Their subject is the greatest of all subjects, when it is recollected from what book it is taken. There they can call the choicest flowers without going very deep, for the little ones do not understand deep doctrine, and for the elder children, they can dig more deeply into it. The theme must never be forgotten—it is Jesus Christ. Thus with the time, subject, and theme properly in mind, they cannot go far wrong. The little ones whom they teach are the statesman's greatest anxiety—they are their future rulers and masters—and if it were not for such schools as this, where would the British constitution be? These little ones must, however, be instructed in the kindest and most persuasive manner, and the teachers must take pains, they must get to the bottom of their lessons and think them out, and

have them quite clear. The next thing they must have is patience and tenacity of purpose; they must hold on, never minding how much ingratitude there is. Wellington said to the soldiers at the battle of Waterloo, "There is nothing behind you." It was no use their giving up in despair; they had nothing behind them, so the teachers must stick to their work tenaciously. They would also require the physical properties of energy and enthusiasm. They would never get on well unless they were energetic, enthusiastic, and joyful. He would also warn them against coming to the school in finery; a great deal of good may be done by setting the children an example in the matter, and also in punctuality and diligence, for a child looks to the teacher far more for example than for precept. They may say, "Who is sufficient for all these things?" but God will supply the strength, and it seemed to him that they would often not be able to do so much good if they knew the good they were already doing by the grace of God.

After the children had sung another hymn the prizes were distributed to those who had earned them during the past year.

The chairman gave a few pleasant words in drawing the meeting to a close, based on two words in the programme, "Chairman's Address." One meaning of address was "a verbal application by way of persuasion," and if he had spoken before the collection he would have made them understand what "a verbal application" was. Another meaning was an address on a letter, and the one he would have sent would have been a "begging letter," for he founded his begging in the name of the children of these schools, who so much needed their help, and also, in the name of philanthropy, as to help these needy ones was to discharge a duty they owed to their country and to God, who said, "Feed my lambs."

THE "ONE TUN" RAGGED SCHOOL.

The twentieth anniversary meeting and third exhibition of window gardening of the school for boys, girls, and infants, Perkins's Rents and Old Pye Street, was presided over by Lord Shaftesbury, K.G., and supported by Sir Robert Carden, Major Cooper Gardiner, Rev. H. S. Paterson, M.D., Rev. H. E. Fox, Messrs. Payne, Barker-Harrison, and H. T. Burgess.

The proceedings were opened with prayer, and his lordship proceeded to distribute the prizes to twenty young persons in service, and for plants to the children. In each case his lordship said a kind word to each of the prize-takers.

This ceremony having been concluded, one of the girls, by name Margaret Forbes, presented to his lordship, on behalf of all of them, a night-shirt, reading an address at the same time begging his lordship's acceptance of it as a little specimen of their work, reminding him that some years ago the girls gave him a day-shirt, which he had honoured them by wearing. The statement also spoke of the knowledge of needlework which they acquired at the schools, and the instruction in cookery which they received.

Lord Shaftesbury said this was a very good thing, for the people of England did not know how to cook. He was very much obliged some years ago, when a great number of the ragged children made him a

counterpane out of little bits of material, with a figure in the middle and a large "S." He promised them faithfully that he would use it, and when he was in the country he never had any other on his bed but that. He couldn't say that he would always wear the shirt, because sometimes it would have to be left off so that it might be washed.

Mr. J. Payne read an abstract of the annual report, which stated that they had completed twenty years of deeply interesting labours. The Divine blessing had rested on the religious instruction, and this was the foundation of all secular education. The school had been subject to frequent visits from School Board officials, and the education given was amply sufficient to render the children good members of society and honest and faithful servants. It was rather a remarkable fact that nearly 70 of the young people that had belonged to the institution had entered the matrimonial state; 11 girls and 8 boys had gone into situations this year; and 24 members of the Youths' Institute had become volunteers. The Band of Hope numbered 80 members. There were Bible and other Classes, and Swimming and Chess Clubs. The Boot and Shoe Club had been the means of supplying nearly 500 pairs of boots by weekly subscriptions of 3d. a week, and the Penny Bank was prospering in every way. The report concluded with a hope that kind friends would continue their help, as there was a large deficiency to make up.

After the children had sung in a highly creditable manner, and a young servant, a prize-holder and a communicant, had repeated very correctly two chapters of Scripture, the meeting was addressed by Lord Shaftesbury, Sir R. W. Carden, Major Cooper Gardiner, and Messrs. Ray, Curtis, Kennedy, and others.

DEPTFORD.

The inaugural meeting of the Deptford Ragged School Band of Hope was held on August 30th, J. H. Esterbrook, Esq., in the chair, who, after some appropriate remarks, went on to show what a great amount of mischief drink had done throughout our land. Mr. Baxendale moved—"That this meeting deeply deplores the evils and miseries of intemperance, and recognising the importance of preventing the children of our schools from acquiring an appetite for intoxicating liquors, pledges itself to promote and support the Band of Hope." He then gave some amusing illustrations showing the advantage of giving a decided "*No.*"

Mr. Whybroo then seconded the resolution, and in course of his address gave four reasons why all should abstain from intoxicants, as they were Dear, Deceitful, Dangerous, Destructive.

Mr. Higgs, of the Peckham Band of Hope Choir, addressed the meeting on the value of perseverance and example, followed by a few words from the chairman, who said he hoped all the young persons present, as well as their older friends, would become Band of Hope members.

Votes of thanks to the chairman, and to the Peckham Band of Hope Choir for the manner in which they had enlivened the proceedings by singing some temperance pieces, were adopted, and the meeting closed with the Doxology.